

*Strix poensis* Fraser, has priority over *Strix affinis* Blyth, 1862, and if the Fernando Po race did not differ from that of the mainland it would have priority over Blyth's name.

We are, however, of the opinion that *Strix poensis* Fraser, should be confined to the Fernando Po race of the Barn Owl, as *Tyto alba poensis* (Fraser), since Chapin op.cit. says that the two specimens from that Island in the American Museum of Natural History, New York, "show more contrast in the vermiculations of crown, back and wing-coverts than those of the mainland."

## On the Races of *Prinia pectoralis* A. Smith

by DR. J. M. WINTERBOTTOM

Received 12th July, 1957

Vincent (*A Check List of the Birds of South Africa*, 1952) follows Roberts (*The Birds of South Africa*, 1940) in recognizing three races of *Prinia pectoralis*, which Roberts characterized as follows:—

*P.p.hewitti* (Roberts), with a considerable amount of grey on the underparts of the body, above slightly darker.

*P.p.malopensis* (Sharpe), a more pallid race.

*P.p.pectoralis* (Smith), intermediate between the other two races.

Thanks to the courtesy of the Director (Dr. V. Fitzsimons) and Mrs. Campbell of the Transvaal Museum and of the Director (Miss M. Courtenay-Latimer) of the East London Museum, a series of 76 specimens from all over the range of the species, but chiefly from the published ranges of *pectoralis* and *hewitti*, was assembled. It was immediately obvious that *malopensis* was a good race, at once separable from the aggregate by the paler coloration of the back feathers, both the dark centres and the lighter margins. But *hewitti* was another matter.

Roberts's original description listed three points of difference between *hewitti* and *pectoralis*; the amount of grey on the underparts; the extent of rufous on the back; and the shade of the ear-coverts. In the series assembled, however, no geographical distribution was discernable in these three variables. The bird with the darkest grey underparts came from Touws River (c. 33° 30' S., 20° E.), which is a place outside the published range of the species as given by Roberts and Vincent; and although a bird from Grahamstown was quite dark, it could be matched by another from Prieska, well inside the supposed range of *pectoralis*. The other characters were similarly randomly distributed. In short, *hewitti* is based on individual variation and only two races are recognizable, as follows:—

1. *Prinia pectoralis pectoralis* (A. Smith), *S.A.Comm.Advert.*, 4, 213, 1829: "Karoo country to the north of the Oliphant's River"—Bitterfontein may be suggested as a restricted type locality.

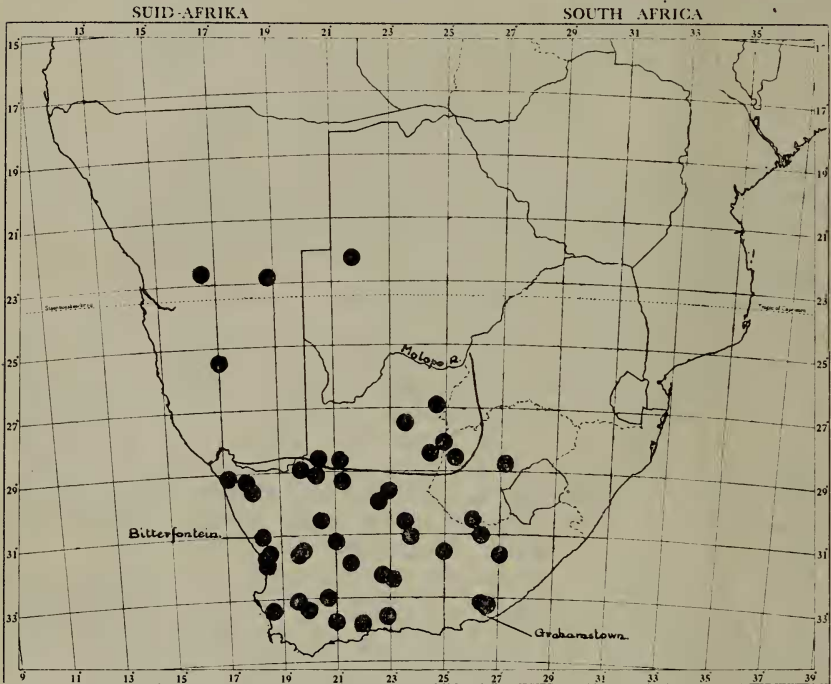
Synonyms: *P.ocularia* (A. Smith), *Ill.Zool.S.:Afr., Aves*, pl. 75, fig. 1, 1843: "Northern districts of Cape Colony;" and *P.o.hewitti* (Roberts), *Ann.Tvl.Mus.*, 15, 1932: 31. Aerodrome, Grahamstown.

*Range*: From Mamre (Malmesbury district), Barrydale, Oudtshoorn and Grahamstown north to the Orange River in the west and to the western Transvaal in the east.

2. *Prinia pectoralis malopensis* (Sharpe), *Bull.B.O.C.*, 13, 1903: 80: Molopo River, Bechuanaland.

*Range:* From Aughrables and Upington north through South West Africa to the limits of Damaraland and east across the Kalanari to Boshoff, in the western Orange Free State.

The work on which this paper is based was done while the author was holding a Senior Bursary of the C.S.I.R., Pretoria.



Range of *Prinia pectoralis*. Dots show localities from which specimens have been examined; the line marks the approximate boundary between the races *pectoralis* and *malopensis*.

## Further Note on the Eggs of the Black-bellied Bustard *Lissotis melanogaster* (Rüppell)

by CAPTAIN C. R. S. PITMAN

Received 26th July, 1957

Vide *Bull.B.O.C.* 77 (5), 1957, pp. 85-86, additional measurements of 19 eggs from Southern Rhodesia, all presumably referable to *Lissotis melanogaster notophila* Oberholser, average 58.4 x 51.5 mm., and of 26 sets, the clutch size in 15 is C/1 and in 11 C/2. Maximum measurements (both in the same egg) are 61 x 55 mm., and minimum (also in the same egg) 54 x 48 mm.